

do so also? The General Assembly has now sanctioned woman's societies for Home Mission work, for French Evangelization work, and for Foreign Mission work. Instead of having separate societies for each of these in the one congregation, would it not be better for the Assembly to recommend Synods and Presbyteries and Sessions to organize woman's missionary societies to embrace all the Scheme, and thus prevent the multiplication of machinery in carrying on the Church's work. If there is a congregational and a woman's and a Sabbath school or juvenile missionary society in connection with a congregation, this is surely enough without having separate woman's societies for each of two or three missionary Schemes.

A somewhat novel entertainment was given by the St. Matthew's Church Young People's Literary Society, Montreal, on Thursday last. The evening was devoted to the study of Shakespeare and his works, some fourteen members of the society rendering in good taste selections from his writings. On Thursday next, the 28th inst., Dr. Beers lectures to the society on "Our Old Home."

THE name of St. Joseph Street Church, Montreal, has been changed to that of Calvin Church. A change of name was necessary because of the fact that the street on which the church is situated is now no longer called St. Joseph Street.

For the past few years the Board of French Evangelization have conducted a mission among the Italians of this city, the missionary employed being the Rev. A. Internoscia, an ex-priest of the Church of Rome, from Italy. Besides a considerable floating population, there are about 800 Italians permanently residing in Montreal. Mr. Internoscia has access to the homes of many of these, and exercises an influence for good over them. The attendance at his Sabbath service is from thirty-five to fifty. His work is beginning to bear fruit, and on Sabbath, the 16th inst., he had the privilege of receiving fifteen Italians into the membership of the Church.

SPECIAL evangelistic services were again conducted in several of the churches of the city last week, the attendance being large and the interest unabated.

THE bazaar under the auspices of the Presbyterian ladies of Cote St. Antoine on Thursday last was a decided success. The contributions of useful and fancy articles sent in far exceeded expectations, as did also the proceeds of the bazaar, from which about \$450 will be realized toward the cushioning of all the seats and other furnishings for the new church edifice.

DURING the past year the Rev. A. B. Mackay, of Crescent Street Church, gave his people an opportunity, in connection with the Wednesday evening service, of contributing for the Foreign Mission Work of the Church, over and above their regular contributions by means of envelopes on Sabbath. As a result the very handsome sum of \$523.95 has been realized. "Go thou and do likewise." In how few prayer meeting services on week evenings is this part of Divine worship attended to?

THIS is the month when many congregations hold their annual meetings. Last week several of these took place in the city churches. For the next few weeks reports of these will appear in these Notes. Ministers and office-bearers of churches in the Province of Quebec and in Eastern Ontario will oblige by forwarding copies of their annual reports, and other church news of interest, addressed, PRESBYTERIAN, Box 1839, Post Office, Montreal.

WE have received a letter from an esteemed correspondent, Mr. Chas. Alexander, of Montreal, regarding a paragraph in our "Montreal Notes" of 23rd December, as to efforts to establish a Protestant asylum for the insane. Mr. Alexander's letter is somewhat lengthy, and upon a subject that is not of general interest to our readers. He assures us of the sincerity of motive of those engaged in trying to institute the asylum, and their freedom from sectarian feeling. No one who knows Mr. Alexander would for a moment doubt the sincerity of his motives, or attribute to him sectarian feeling. The paragraph in "Montreal Notes" complained of expressed the hope that sectarian feeling would not endanger the success of the effort to establish the asylum, and regretted that while ministers of the other Protestant denominations were represented on the board of provisional governors, the ministers of the Presbyterian Church in Canada were not, although they were more numerous in Montreal than those of other Churches. The correctness of this statement is corroborated by the list of governors sent us by Mr. Alexander. Comparing that list with the list of the persons incorporated by the Quebec Legislature in 1881 as the "Protestant Hospital for the Insane," we find (1) that one Episcopal minister and one Presbyterian Church in Canada minister were on the list in 1881, whereas on the present list of governors there are two Episcopal ministers but not one of our Church; and (2), including ministers and laymen, there were five Episcopalians and eleven Presbyterians, including Church of Scotland and American Presbyterian Church, on the list of 1881, whereas on the present list of provisional governors there are eight Episcopalians and five Presbyterians. Without questioning motives at all it seems a pity that none of our ministers are on the board of directors or governors, and it might probably be found conducive to the success of the effort were this defect remedied.

KNOX COLLEGE STUDENTS' MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The fourth annual meeting of this society was held in Convocation Hall on Friday evening, the 15th inst. The meeting was in all respects a most successful one. The hall was filled, and the large audience listened throughout with deep interest to the different addresses and papers, and all went away feeling that they had been amply rewarded for coming out.

The meeting was opened by singing part of the forty-third Psalm, reading the fifty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, and prayer, in which Rev. Principal Caven led.

The chair was occupied by Mr. Robert Kilgour, a warm friend and supporter of the society, who in a few well chosen remarks referred to his interest in the society, its work and the need of earnest work for Christ.

After singing the hymn, "Jesus shall reign," the president of the society, Mr. Wm. Farquharson, B.A., delivered an address on "Missionary zeal in colleges, how to foster it." He showed that students must seek to cultivate a missionary spirit, especially in view of the fact that the foreign fields need to be supplied from our colleges, and that the missionary problem can only be solved when each student is willing to go anywhere at the call of the Master. This spirit is to be fostered by knowledge of the heathen's need, the power of the Gospel to alleviate their wants, by noting the progress of missions and engaging in some kind of mission work while in college, scope for such activity being given by the work of the society.

The next paper was by Mr. C. W. Gordon, B.A., who gave a very racy and pleasing account of mission work done by him in South Manitoba last summer. The field itself, the people, the work and its results were all touched upon in a way which was exceedingly interesting.

Mr. J. Goforth next read a paper on China, in which he referred to the extent and resources of the country, the antiquity of the nation, the immense population and their need of the Gospel. The work now being done and the present outlook were referred to, and the claims of the perishing millions of China upon us were strongly urged.

The missionary hymn, "From Greenland's icy mountains," was sung, after which the Rev. R. P. McKay, M.A., gave a very earnest and stirring address, on the advisability of introducing into our Church some of the methods adopted by other missionary societies. The Moravians had gone forth as missionaries, though they could do no more than read. Might not some be sent out as missionaries who had not a college education, desirable as that might be? The Roman Catholics, among others things, had colleges that educate men to be missionaries. Might it not be a good thing for our Church to have a college for such work? The missionaries of the China Inland Mission have no stated salary, but are trusting the Lord for their support. Why might not men go out from our Church in the same way, trusting the Lord to lead His people to provide the requisite means of support?

The thanks of the society having been tendered to the chairman and the Rev. Mr. McKay, the meeting was closed by singing the long metre doxology, and with the benediction, which was pronounced by the Rev. Dr. McLaren.

JAMES ARGO, Recording Secretary.

Sabbath School Teacher.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

Feb. 7, 1886. THE FIERY FURNACE. Dan. 3: 1-18.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace."—Dan. iii. 17.

INTRODUCTORY.

In the second chapter an account is given of Nebuchadnezzar's wonderful dream and the manner of its interpretation. It illustrates what was noted in the last lesson, that "Daniel had an understanding of visions and dreams." In order to get a more complete knowledge of the character of Daniel and his companions, which will help us in understanding this, it should be carefully read. When Daniel heard of the king's decree, that all the wise men should be put to death because they could not make known and interpret the dream—which was not indeed until the executioner came to his own house—he asked for time. He then called his three friends, and they united in prayer to God for the help needed. When the secret was made known to Daniel he immediately blessed the Lord for His mercy. When brought before the king he was most careful to impress the fact that what he was going to say was not from himself, but from God, to whom all credit is due.

After the dream is related and expounded, and Daniel is promoted to the chief place amongst the governors of Babylon, he does not forget his three companions and friends. He makes request to the king, and they also are given important positions. Daniel thus in every step shows the true humility and trustfulness and gratitude of a man whose heart is right before God. What we have already seen of these men makes it no doubtful question how they are going to act in any future emergency. Still it is to be remembered that it is daily grace that sustains us. Victory in the past is no guarantee for the future, unless strength is sought in the same place and way.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Golden Image.—It was sixty cubits—about ninety feet high—which measurement probably includes the pedestal on which it stood. The breadth—six cubits, or nine feet—would not be proportional if the image itself were ninety feet. It was probably plated—not solid; but if it were solid, the quantity of gold would not be incredible when we think of all the countries subdued, and treasures gathered by Nebuchadnezzar. National wealth was supposed to consist in the amount of gold and silver accumulated, and the amounts captured by Eastern conquerors are fabulous.

Dura.—It was erected on the plain of Dura, which is supposed to have been a few miles south-east of the city.

Object.—It was probably erected chiefly for a political purpose. All the chief men from all the provinces were to be assembled on the dedication day for worship, and thus a bond of union would be created by making Babylon the religious centre, and by bowing before the same god, which was the most imposing ever seen. There may also have been an element of thankfulness to Baal in the heart of Nebuchadnezzar for all the successes that had attended his ambitious designs.

The king himself was master of ceremonies, and commanded that at the sound of music all men should fall down and worship.

II. Three Dissenters.—Where Daniel was on that day is not known. It is certain that he did not worship, and about as certain that he was not present, or he would have taken his stand beside his friends.

They knew what was coming, and had their minds made up. They determined quietly to decline to worship, and leave the result with God. There are two kinds of resistance—active and passive. They chose the latter, which is usually the best, although sometimes active measures are justifiable.

These spiritual conditions appear in the answer they gave the king:

(1) Faith in God's power. (Ver. 17.)—They say: "Our God is able to deliver us from the fiery furnace." The King said (ver. 15): "Who is that God that is able to deliver you out of my hands?" They know One who is able, and they respectfully tell the King their belief.

(2) Faith in God's wisdom.—They said: "He will deliver us. But if not, we will not serve thy god." Whatever God would do was the right to them, and they were satisfied to trust in Him. It is in this latter respect that our faith is apt to be weak. We know the power, but are apt to question the goodness of God.

III. Pride Offended. (Ver. 19.)—Nebuchadnezzar conquered the world, but now meets three men he cannot conquer.

(1) Enraged.—Such tyrants are always impatient of opposition. That day was to be one of the great events in his life; so far everything went as he intended, and that now it should be marred by the disobedience of three captives, and three who were so honoured by him was beyond endurance. He lost all control of his temper and became furious. They must be treated as traitors.

(2) Furnace.—This is supposed to have been a smelting furnace, which must have been large when four men could walk in it. If constructed like Roman furnaces, it was open at the top, into which they were thrown, and had a door at the side, by which ashes were raked away, and through which the King afterward saw what surprised him.

He commands that the furnace be heated to seven times its wonted temperature, and they thrown in bound hand and foot in their garments, as they were. No delay. He wished to impress upon all present the terror of the law against disobedience.

Let us remember what Christ taught in the parable of the wedding feast about the man who ventured in without the wedding garment. That will be the verdict of a righteous Judge against all who disobey His command to repent and believe the Gospel.

IV. Pride Humbled.—The first thing that would detract from the feeling of satisfaction would be the death of his strong men. They went up to the edge of the furnace, which would ordinarily have been safe, but not with the excessive heat. When it is uncovered the flames dart out and destroy them, whilst the noble three fall down in the midst.

Astonished.—He saw four instead of three, loose and without any hurt. He is no longer in a rage. In the presence of his golden image it might be consistent to get furious; but when men get a glimpse of the supernatural—of the other world—they feel their own weakness. Thus did Nebuchadnezzar feel when Daniel told him the dream (chap. ii. 46), and so did Daniel feel when he saw the vision (chap. x. 9), and the Disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration. Nothing will humble men so quickly as to get their eyes opened to see the invisible Son of God, or a son of the gods. He did not know who, but he recognized that the fourth person was more than human. It was, no doubt, the Angel of the Covenant that so often appeared in Old Testament times. Jesus before His incarnation was the shepherd of His people.

In the Apocrypha is found a song said to have been sung by these men whilst in the furnace, as Paul and Silas sang whilst their feet were in the stocks in the goal at Philippi. How often martyrs have sung at the stake, and the suffering have said it is good to be afflicted!

Extolled praise. (Ver. 28.)—The king called them forth, and then blessed them for their courage in refusing to worship any but their own God, and in setting his command at naught, and blessed their God for sending His angel to rescue them.

That is the result promised to all true and loyal subjects, as to Christ Himself. Every knee shall bow and all tongues confess, although much of it may be unwilling submission. Let us be true and share His glory, which is our privilege.

These men had then the reward of being promoted to greater honour than ever in the nation, of having a decree issued that no one should speak disrespectfully of the God of Israel, and especially of greatly strengthening the faith of the Church in all generations.

V. The Accusers. (Ver. 8-12, 27.)—They were jealous of these Israelites, and sought an occasion against them. They probably anticipated this opportunity of accusing them and at once embraced it. What must have been their disappointment at the result!

It may be, probably, some of them were the same men whose lives were saved by Daniel's interpretation of the dream. Thus they would repay their benefactors. They get off now with a disappointment; but as they did not learn wisdom, and continued their opposition even against Daniel, some of them were torn to pieces by the lions. (Chap. vi.)

Thus will end in confusion and shame all the efforts of the accusers of God's people. The great accuser himself will be confounded. Our safety is in the Lord.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. Let us obey conscience at whatever risks.
2. Pride will have a fall.
3. The Lord is right unto all them that call upon Him.
4. He giveth songs in the night.
5. He maketh the wrath of man to praise Him.